

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 7-13 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Claims 1, 3 and 11-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe (US 2005/0124407) in view of Bryant et al. (US 7,318,774).

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a content reproduction terminal for reproducing content that is video or music of one of a plurality of genres including sport, drama, movie, and education, said content reproduction terminal comprising: a terminal body; and a secure device removable from said terminal body; wherein said secure device includes a membership information hold unit operable to hold a plurality of sets of membership information which are distributed to a membership user and indicate one or more groups to which the membership user belongs; wherein each of the groups includes a membership service provider that issues said secure device, and users who have signed up for membership of the membership service provider; and wherein a selection unit is operable to select a first application program corresponding to a group to which the membership service provider belongs, from among the first application programs stored in said first storage unit, when said operation mode setting unit sets the members-only operation mode, the membership service provider providing the content reproduced by said reproduction unit.

Applicants respectfully submit that Rowe and Bryant do not teach or suggest the above-noted combination of features recited in amended claim 1.

First, with respect to Rowe, Applicants note that this reference discloses a game machine which includes a smart card reader, wherein a smart card having gaming applications stored thereon can be inserted into the smart card reader (see paragraphs [0089] and [0090]).

As noted by the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action, the gaming applications of Rowe can be a bonus game application, a progressive game application, a pay-table application, or a player tracking application (see paragraphs [0010] and [0027]). As described in Rowe, when a smart card is inserted into the game machine, game play information that is stored on the smart card can be obtained, whereby the game play information can be used for such purposes as tracking a running total of wager amounts for particular games, or carrying out a bonus game feature (see paragraphs [0029] and [0030]).

Based on the above-noted disclosure in Rowe, the Examiner has taken the position in the Office Action that a gaming application in Rowe can be customized for a user based on their individual player tracking information (see the paragraph bridging pages 2-3 of the Office Action).

While Applicants agree that Rowe disclose the ability to customize a gaming application for a user, it is respectfully submitted that the ability to provide a customized gaming application such as that described in Rowe does not correspond to the above-noted features recited in the amended version of claim 1.

For example, claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the claimed “content” is video or music of one of a plurality of genres including sport, drama, movie, and education. In addition, the claimed “groups” have been further clarified, whereby claim 1 now recites that each of the groups includes a membership service provider that issues said secure device, and users who have signed up for membership of the membership service provider.

In addition, as noted above, the claimed “selection unit” has been further clarified such that claim 1 now recites that the selection unit is operable to select a first application program corresponding to a group to which the membership service provider belongs, from among the first application programs stored in the first storage unit, when the operation mode setting unit sets the members-only operation mode, the membership service provider providing the content reproduced by said reproduction unit.

Regarding the above-noted features recited in amended claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that while Rowe discloses the ability to provide a customized gaming application, that Rowe does not disclose (i) that the content is video or music of one of a plurality of genres including sport, drama, movie, and education, (ii) that each of a plurality of groups includes a membership service provider that issues said secure device, and users who have signed up for membership of the membership service provider, and (iii) that a selection unit selects a first application program corresponding to a group to which the membership service provider belongs, from among first application programs stored in a first storage unit, when an operation mode setting unit sets the members-only operation mode, the membership service provider providing the content reproduced by a reproduction unit.

Second, with respect to Bryant, Applicants note that this reference discloses a member loyalty system in which a player information delivery system may greet the player by name, or a photograph or caricature of the player may be used as the top symbol in a spinning reel feature game (see col. 6, line 63 through col. 7, line 3).

In this regard, taking the foregoing descriptions of Rowe and Bryant into account, Applicants respectfully submit that even if the gaming machine of Rowe was modified so as to have the ability to display a photograph or caricature of the player, as taught by Bryant, that the

combination of Rowe and Bryant would still not teach or render obvious the above-noted features recited in amended claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested. Claims 3 and 11 depend from claim 1 and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Regarding claim 12, Applicants note that this claim has been amended in a similar manner as claim 1. In particular, claim 12 is directed to a content reproduction method, the content being video or music of one of a plurality of genres including sport, drama, movie, and education, the method comprising: a membership information hold step of holding, in the secure device, a plurality of sets of membership information which are distributed to a membership user and indicate one or more groups to which the membership user belongs; wherein each of the groups includes a membership service provider that issues the secure device, and users who have signed up for membership of the membership service provider; and wherein in said selection step, a first application program corresponding to a group to which the membership service provider belongs is selected from among the first application programs stored in the first storage unit, when the members-only operation mode is set in said operation mode setting step, the membership service provider providing the content reproduced in said reproduction step.

For reasons at least similar to those as discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art references do not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above-noted features recited in amended claim 12.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 12 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested. Claim 13 depends from claim 12 and is therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

B. Claims 7-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rowe (US 2005/0124407) in view of Bryant et al. (US 7,318,774), and further in view of Guthery (US 6,779,112).

Claims 7-10 depend from claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that Guthery does not cure the deficiencies of Rowe and Bryant, as discussed above, with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 7-10 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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